

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NOUAKC 01981 180636Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----067132 180640Z /13

O 171640Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9967
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY RABAT

C O N F I O E N T I A L NOUAKCHOTT 1981

EXDIS

LONDON FOR SAUNDERS

LUXEMBOURG FOR MOOSE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, MO, MR, SS
SUBJ: RESOLUTION OF THE SAHARA CONFLICT

REF: NOUAKCHOTT 1923, B. STATE 177978, C. STATE 178745
D. NOUAKCHOTT 19966C1. ON JULY 17, MAURITANIAN NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL
AND MINING (SNIM)
DIRECTOR GENERAL ISMAEL OULD AMAR CALLED ON ME TO ELABORATE
ON HIS JULY 15 COMMENT THAT NEWS ON SAHARA AND MAURITA-
NIAN MRROCCAN RELATIONS EMERGING FROM FONMIN LAGHDAF'S TRIP TO RABAT
HAD BEEN GOOD (NOUAKCHOTT 1966). KING HASSAN, AMAR SAID, HAD
RECEIVED LAGHDAF AND GIVEN HIS PERSONAL ASSURANCES THAT HE
UNDERSTOOD MAURITANIA'S DESIRE FOR A PROMPT PEACEFUL SETTLE-
MENT OF THE CONFLICT AND WAS PREPARED TO BEGIN THE NEGOTIATION
PROCESS TO ACHIEVE THAT END. IT WAS AGREED ALSO THAT THERE
WOULD BE NO SEPARATE NEGOTIATING ON THE PART OF EITHER THE
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MOROCRNS OR THE MAURITANIANS.

2. AMAR ALSO USED OCCASION TO REPORT PRESIDENT MOUSTAPHA'D
REACTION TO NEWS OF MOOSE AND SAUNDERS VISIT TO ALGIERS, RABAT
AND PARIS. (I HAD CONVEYED THIS NEWS TO AMAR JULY 15 PER
STATE 178745). MOUSTAPNA'S COMMENT, AMAR SAID, WAS QUOTE WHY
NOT NOUAKCHOTT AS WELL UNQUOTE. I SUGGESTED THAT SUCH A VISIT

MIGHT MAKE US APPEAR TO BE PLAYING MEDIATORY ROLE IN EYES OF THE REST OF THE WORLD. HIS REPLY WAS THAT THE VISITS TO MOROCCO AND ALGERIA ALREADY SIGNED OUR INTEREST AND THAT IT WOULD APPEAR TO THE REST OF THE WORLD PERFECTLY NATURAL FOR A HIGH RANKING U.S. OFFICIAL TO TAKE THE OCCASION OF BEING IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD TO MEET WITH MAURITANIA'S NEW LEADERSHIP, PARTICULARLY AT A TIME WHEN THERE WERE MANIFESTATIONS OF GOOD WILL FROM ALL THREE PARTIES WHICH GAVE NEW HOPE FOR A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE CONFLICT. WITHOUT FURTHER COMMENT, I PROMISED I WOULD CONVEY THIS MESSAGE TO MY GOVERNMENT.

3. AS REGARDS ALGIERS' OFFER TO REESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH MAURITANIA, AMAR STATED THAT MAURITANIA COULD NOT IGNORE THE INVITATION BUT THAT IT WOULD HAVE TO REPLY TO THE EFFECT THAT NORMAL RELATIONS COULD NOT BE ESTABLISHED UNTIL A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE WESTERN SAHARA CONFLICT WAS IN THE OFFING.

4. COMMENT: AMAR'S QUOTE GOOD UNQUOTE NEWS RE MOROCCAN POSITION ON NEGOTIATIONS I LESS THAN STARTLING. A KEY QUESTION AS YET UNANSWERED, IS WHETHER MOROCCANS WILLING TO PERMIT POLISARIO PARTICIPATION IN SUCH DISCUSSIONS. STILL, AS AMAR TELLS IT, KING HASSAN'S REACTION SEEMS GENERALLY TO SQUARE WITH WHAT THE MAURITANIANS ARE SEEKING TO ACCOMPLISH.

5. RECOMMENDATION: I RECOMMEND THAT ASSISTANT SECRETARY
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MOOSE AND/OR ASSISTANCE SECRETARY SAUNDERS STOP OFF HERE DURING THEIR CURRENT TRIPS. AS LONG AS WE ARE SEEKING THE VIEWS OF THE PRINCIPAL ANTAGONISTS, IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO SOUND OUT THOSE OF THE COUNTRY WHICH STANDS TO LOSE MOST IN THE CONFLICT AND WHOSE THINKING ON THE PROBLEM IS APPARENTLY EVOLVING. A VISIT AT THIS TIME WOULD ALSO BE A NICE GESTURE TOWARDS A NEW MODERATE REGIME WHICH IS SEEKING, AND WHICH BADLY NEEDS, OUR SUPPORT. KRYZA

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